



**BELLEVUE AIRFIELD PARK – MASTER PLAN UPDATE
COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETING #1 NOTES**

26 JULY 2022 – 6:30PM-8:20PM

In Attendance: 78 (approx.)

In 2002, Recognizing that the Bellevue Airfield site may represent the last opportunity to acquire a large, undeveloped, relatively flat parcel of property in Bellevue, Council authorized the purchase of the properties with the intent of developing an active recreational use community park.

In late 2021, the Bellevue City Council unanimously supported: 1) the staff and SPLASHForward Recommended Concept Plan for a 130,000 sq ft Aquatic facility within Bellevue, 2) a formal partnership to support fundraising for the development of a new aquatics center with SPLASHForward and 3) Identified the Bellevue Airfield Park (BAP) as the preferred site to support a new aquatic center directing a Master Plan update to consider the potential inclusion of the Bellevue Aquatic Center (BAC).

The Bellevue Airfield Park (BAP) is the only undeveloped City-owned site large enough to accommodate the recommended Aquatic facility Concept plan (10-11 acres). Additional elements recommending an aquatic facility at this site are: Easy access off of 1-90, existing shared parking agreements with owners of the surrounding office park and the site size that could allow for park and BAC complementary outdoor recreation and open space development.

The BAP Master Plan Update community meeting #1 was held to kick off the robust outreach process to inform potential development parameters, develop master plan options, and set the stage for recommendation of a updated master plan from the Bellevue Parks & Community Services Board to ultimately adopt the master plan update by Bellevue City Council.

This document is a summary of the community feedback from the break out rooms utilized by the City's consultant – Walker Macy to solicit input from the Outreach meeting #1.

Group 1

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- Use for walking dog; forested area on NW is remote and not penetrated by trails and beneficial to wildlife
- Historical property for Bellevue (landfill, airfield), that is an opportunity and excited about what the future holds, incl aquatics



- Grew up in neighborhood and bought house in neighborhood – Like differentiation between wetland and commercial area above and would like to keep existing
- Lived in area over 20 yrs – value serenity, natural areas, wildlife in park; not interested in development that cuts down trees to accommodate people; Robinswood already has structured facilities.
- Daily visitor, dog trainer – Like wildlife, natural area; functions beautifully; meadow is great place for training pets that can't go to a dog park
- Pickleball community – would like small area developed into 8 or 16 pickleball courts and imprint would be small; WA state sport; will likely be losing International School courts; strike balance between natural and active use

What was successful about 2012 Plan?

- Trails in NW quadrant are not desirable; want natural area; like existing trails preserved but not much otherwise
- On the contrary, a voice for the trails on the NW; split between passive and active seems to be a good balance and plan did that well
- Accessible routes from parking for wheelchair, as well as walking, is important
- NW quadrant shows a lot of parking, which would wipe out forest – is a concern; where would the current aquatic facility go now?; not sure how to balance with more active if we keep everything; blackberry bushes are used by wildlife, don't take veg out; need balance; air quality, preservation necessary
- Upvoted for above comment; need stewardship, preservation
- Proposed plan had seen previously with aquatic center; would like to see that included, but wonder about the use of the existing aquatic facility
- Maximize shared parking; don't infiltrate forest with asphalt; like Robinswood that includes restrooms and facilities amongst woodlands; connection between Airfield and Robinswood; do we need to have those fields at Airfield?; remote work may allow for expansion of off-site shared parking
- NW quadrant is heavily forested with parking and invites drug trafficking; commented on previously; can't see what is going on; security risk to users and neighborhood; existing aquatic center is not beyond its useful life

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- Pickleball; could also put in at Robinswood courts and shared or dedicate use; didn't work previously with tennis court community
- Too bad that tennis courts couldn't be shared re above comment; use existing aquatic facility; nobody uses the existing Robinswood tennis courts; use existing areas first
- Aquatic center
- Convert tennis courts elsewhere to pickleball
- Spiritridge convert to tennis court to pickleball; convert other areas; natural areas preference
- How would aquatic center here affect neighborhood pools?; Research into historic pools that exist and how that would impact



- Re above comment - Those are private pools and we have a wait list for lessons at current center

Group 2

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- Wildlife habitat – preserve elements for quality of life; meadow habitat is decreasing throughout the state
- Like trails – hike and run
- Location is under-utilized, looking forward to seeing facilities in the park

What was successful about 2012 Plan?

- Way it was divided; blend of both active and passive uses/areas
- Restrooms
- Need a mitigation plan regarding light and noise
- Will sportsfields be multi-purpose? Be flexible to accommodate changing/new sports
- Fields should not affect surrounding neighbors; put closer to businesses
- Concessions – good to get a hot drink

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- Aquatic Facility – BAC is old and small
- Playground
- Pedestrian access from neighborhoods; especially from the north and east
- 8 or 16 pickleball courts – less impact due to small footprint; can host regional tournaments. Build in Phase 1. Need to ensure sound mitigation plan. Could build on top of roof (ie, aquatic facility)

Group 3

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- Many attendees like the openness of the existing park
- Many enjoyed taking walks and appreciated the lack of overall park development.
- Picnic area were spread out and not cramped or congested.
- While the overall openness of the park was appreciated, some member of the group wanted more trails and picnic areas without creating areas of congestion/crowding. Some trails should be ADA compliant.
- Many attendees did not want off-leash areas as Robinswood Park was close by.
 - One attendee wanted more activities for dogs but did not elaborate as to what those activities should be.
- Some attendees thought that the activities from Spiritridge Park could be extended to Airfield Park.

What was successful about 2012 Plan?



- Some attendees did not know of the plan's existence, while other attendees knew that there was a Master Plan but had not seen it until this meeting.
- The group enjoyed the mix of passive and active uses.
 - Attendees requested more hard court/racket sports for example pickleball, over sport fields.
 - Sports fields
 - Many thought the sport fields would bring too much traffic to the area.
 - It was pointed that multi-use sports fields are in high demand throughout the city.
 - Sport field demand will continue to grow as new field sport such as Cricket becomes popular with residents.
- Some attendees thought that proposed active areas may be overly dedicated to younger age groups suggesting that we are leaving out the older demographic from the Master Plan.
- Attendees thought the trails were underdeveloped and there should be more trails.
- Some attendees thought that that Master Plan represented an over developed park with not enough natural/undisturbed areas.
 - Less emphasis on sport fields and more emphasis on leaving areas undeveloped and pristine.
- There seemed to be an overall theme of keeping the park undisturbed or only having minimal development.
- One attendee suggested that the city purchase the Boeing property for park expansion.
- Some attendees thought that the Master Plan could have more pedestrian entry points into the park.

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- There should be a community Garden
- There was a strong call for more picnic areas.
- There was a strong call for more trails.
- Many attendees thought that the City should maintain the status quo by keeping the park undeveloped or minimal development.
- Adding a skateboard park was strongly discouraged by most attendees.
- Sport Fields
 - Attendees thought that there should be fewer sports fields as it could lead to park overcrowding
 - Some questioned if sports fields were necessary in the updated Master Plan.
 - Traffic/congestion concerns
 - Noise concerns
- Some attendees called for no new playgrounds as Spiritridge and Robinswood parks are nearby.



- Aquatic Center
 - Most attendees understood the need for a new aquatic center but questioned if Airfield Park is the most appropriate place for it.
 - Concerns over increase traffic and noise particularly during swim meets.
 - One attendee suggested a water park for kids in lieu of a new aquatic center.
 - One attendee suggested that a new aquatic center may be redundant as Phantom Lake pool is nearby.
- Pickleball Complex
 - Most attendees requested some sort of dedicated pickleball courts.
 - Some attendees did not know that the City has an existing pickleball court and several tennis courts that are striped for pickleball.
 - One attendee suggested a pickleball complex for holding events/competitions similar to the dedicated courts at Bainbridge Island.
 - One attendee suggested that a pickleball complex could have a smaller footprint compared to other hard court sport complexes.
- Many attendees were against adding an off-leash dog park.
 - Preferred to keeping dogs on a leash.
 - One attendee suggested a dog training facility to train misbehaving dogs that go to the Robinswood off-leash area.
 - Robinswood off-leash area is nearby making an off-leash area at Airfield Park redundant and non-necessary.

Group 4

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- 2 participants like the undeveloped open space.
- Valued the trails and peacefulness
- Improve security lighting for safety
- Better user access to trails entrance points including bikes
- Better user access through the East side (Boeing) including connecting to the SpiritRidge Loop foot trail

What was successful about 2012 Plan?

- The question was posed as to why the original plan hasn't been implemented and why the need for an update.
- Why is a more detailed design/layout for an Aquatic center not being presented.

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- Beach Volleyball courts.
- Liked every element on the slide and would like to find room to fit them all in the park.



- Aquatic Center footprint will require and take up too much of the available space and would force the elimination of many of the other program elements.
- Liked the meadow wide open space.

Other:

- What will be future developments on the Boeing site and the Microsoft leased office space.
- Provide more information on the condition of the landfill/methane area.

Group 5

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- Likes the quietness and openness of the area currently. Observes users flying drones or sail planes.
- Frequently visits the forested areas for walking and enjoying nature.
- Sees a lot of dogs running, local employees using area as a dog park, people picking fruit and enjoying the water ponds. Personally, enjoys walks through the woods.
- Would like to see a proposed mitigation plan for the Phantom Lake runoff.
- Enjoys walks around the lake. Concerned about the introduction of more vehicles to the area. A lot of people go for walks there regularly so wouldn't like to see it changed into something that couldn't be used as it is currently.
- Uses Boeing access trail for jogging. Likes the tree canopy. Would prefer that any active design elements be minimized.
- Is Walker Macy local? (Consultant responded)
- Walks dog twice a day. Recalls that there used to be a group that met at the old picnic tables to walk dogs as a group.

What was successful about 2012 Plan?

- Participated in 2012 community outreach. Sports fields were prioritized more highly by the City, than what was actually reflected within the community's responses. Doesn't like the prospect of traffic and high impact lighting in the neighborhood. Advocates for the preservation of trails adjacent to the ponds. Ponds looked better maintained by Boeing. Not great now.
- Lower impact activities. No ball fields.
- Why do we need more sports on this field when Robinswood is so close? Different uses should be concentrated at the two parks.
- Restrooms were good.
- Where is the access point? Frontage road, etc.? (Consultant responded)

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- Overall, there is very little access to water related activities in Bellevue. Supports indoor swimming pool.
- Agrees with indoor swimming pool. Aquatic Center is not adequate for competition swimming and has multiple other issues. Bellevue is too large of a



city not to have a competition level swimming pool and basically surrounded by water.

- Likes the idea of pool for water therapy for seniors and/or the disabled. However, once you build upon a natural area, it's gone. No need for more sports fields.
- What's the cost for an aquatic center? Would this call for tax dollars? Swimming pools are a sinkhole financially.
- Bend, Oregon is a good example of a successfully operated pool.
- Dog pool or natural water feature for dogs. Any building on the site is going to be a loss.
- Find a smaller site for an aquatic center. Supports the idea but not here. Should be left open for more natural experiences.
- Make design connections to neighboring areas. Ecological interests and nature play.
- Only a third of an acre is needed for eight pickleball courts. This works with other suggestions for low level sports activities.
- On site park monitoring needed for an area this large. Dedicated station for park ranger, etc. Has maintenance and facilities concerns. Notices homeless activity, needles, etc. Suggests educational opportunities, community clean teams.
- How much land would be lost to parking?
- Joint Parks staff security/restroom building. A central node.
- Shade. Drinking water.
- What would the footprint of the aquatic center be? Would this number include parking?

Final General Questions from Group 5

- What's the plan for vehicle access?
- Use of existing Boeing parking?
- Any future parking agreements with adjacent commercial properties?

Group 6

What qualities do you value at Airfield Park today?

- Existential threat to other (private) pools in the area. Are we overdeveloping a resource in that area? What research has been done in regards to this?
- Preservation of 'Open Space' it will all be gone soon.
- Find a way to preserve open space in the design.
- Love the aspect of undeveloped open space.

What was successful about 2012 Plan?

- Why did it not get developed before under the previous plan.



- Concern expressed for water quality as the flow continues towards Phantom Lake.
- Would love to see picnic shelters and benches.
- Recognition of the huge demand for multi-use sports fields and sport courts.
- Expressed concern that the pool was going on the site no matter what the public said.
- Where is all the parking coming from?
- We need to protect the trees.
- Additional comments for picnic shelters and benches for walking.

What programmatic elements or activities would you like to see at Airfield Park?

- Due to length of conversation on previous comments, this question was not posed.